

Leptophloeus clematidis (Erichson) (Col. Cucujidae)
discovered in Suffolk

By David R. Nash¹

Leptophloeus clematidis (Er.) must be considered the rarest of our native Laemophloeinae. According to available published records, it would appear that the beetle has been taken in this country in only four localities, three of them in Kent, the other in Oxfordshire. Fowler (1889) reported it from Gravesend (Janson), Dartford (Champion), and Henley (Power), whilst the Supplement (1913) to this work adds Higham (Walker). Mr. A. A. Allen (*in litt.*) informs me that, according to the late Dr. A. M. Masee, the last known captures were those of J. J. Walker at Higham. Apparently, Dr. Masee worked most strenuously for the beetle at Higham and elsewhere in Kent, but without success. Mr. Allen has also often tried to find the insect. Since the captures cited above, *L. clematidis* appears to have been lost sight of as a British species.

On April 17th, 1977, I found the beetle to be quite common (c. 20 individuals noted) with its host *Xylocleptes bispinus* (Duftschmid) in dead stems of *Clematis vitalba* L. at Little Blakenham, near Ipswich, Suffolk (TM14). I re-visited the locality on April 30th, 1978, to confirm the continued presence of the species, but was only able to find a dead example in a cobweb. I looked for the beetle again on April 18th, 1979, and immediately found three examples, of which two were retained. The colony is in a sheltered, sunny spot on the chalk and appears restricted to a few metres, despite the abundance of *Clematis* and *Xylocleptes* in the immediate vicinity.

In view of the paucity of information available to Coleopterists who may wish to search effectively for *L. clematidis*, details of my own limited experience may be of value. The beetle appears to be found most easily by peeling off the loose, stringy bark of *Clematis* stems with a diameter of about 1 cm. If this procedure is carried out slowly and gently the beetles will usually be found clinging to the hard interior of the stem. The most efficient way of doing this is to break off about a 30 cm. length of dead *Clematis* and remove the bark over a white plastic sheet. As the beetles can be found inside the *Xylocleptes* burrows as well — although in my experience not in such numbers — the debarked piece of stem may then be split longitudinally with the aid of a thumbnail and its interior examined. These observations are based on very limited time spent looking for the species, and it may prove to be equally easily found in the thinner *Xylocleptes*-infested stems. Because of the rarity and apparently extreme localisation of the beetle, I

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have deliberately only searched a limited number of suitable stems each year on the precise site of the colony.

It remains to be seen whether *L. clematidis* is still to be found in its old haunts. If it is extremely localised even within these few places, then great diligence or luck will be required if it is to be located. The late Dr. Masee, however, was renowned for his energetic persistence in the field in pursuit of elusive species. His failure, and that of Mr. Allen, to locate this Cucijid is perhaps indicative that the species could be extinct in Kent. I have no information regarding the Oxfordshire capture, or whether other collectors have tried to find it there. I have searched unsuccessfully for *L. clematidis* in Wiltshire.

Acknowledgements

I thank Mr. A. A. Allen for helpful correspondence regarding the activities of himself and the late Dr. Masee in the search for *L. clematidis* in the post-Fowler era.

References

- Fowler, W. W. (1889). *The Coleoptera of the British Islands*, vol. 3. Reeve & Co.
 Fowler, W. W. & Donisthorpe, H. (1913). *The Coleoptera of the British Islands*, vol. 6. (Supplement). Reeve & Co.

COLEOPHORA LASSELLA STAUD. IN KENT. — On the 9th June 1979, in company with Mr. M. Newcombe, I spent several hours in the Thornden/Radfall woods, near Blean. Though mainly cloudy, the day was pleasant, insects were quite active, and a number of interesting species occurred.

When compiling a list for Mr. Newcombe, I made several genitalia slide mounts of the *Coleophora* to ascertain their identity and found one specimen of *Coleophora potentillae* Elisha, one *C. caespitiella* Zell., two *C. alticolella* Zell., and one *C. lassella* Staud. It appears to be the first county record of *C. lassella* for Kent.

Also taken during the day was a specimen of the rather local *Ancylys obtusana* Haw. — E. S. BRADFORD, 82 Garston Lane, Garston, Watford, Herts., WD2 6QR.

THE DATES OF PUBLICATION OF TUTT'S PTEROPHORINA OF BRITAIN. — Whilst browsing through some back issues of *The Entomologist's Record*, I came across a note by T. Bainbrigge Fletcher (Vol. 50, 1938, p. 46) in connection with Tutt's *Pterophorina of Great Britain*, enquiring when the different parts of the book were issued. There does not seem to have been any response to this note. It may therefore be of interest to record that I recently came across a copy of this book, containing pencilled notes of the dates of publication, as follows:— Part I, pp. 1-24, November 1889. Part II, pp. 25-48, September 1890. Part III, pp. 49-72, October 1891. Part IV, pp. 73-96, June 1892. Part V, pp. 97-120, March 1893. Part VI, pp. 121-144, January 1894. Part VII, pp. 145-161, February 1895. — C. L. NISSEN, Batiment F2, Appt. 271, "Résidence Beauséjour", ave. Clémenceau, 77100, Meaux, France.